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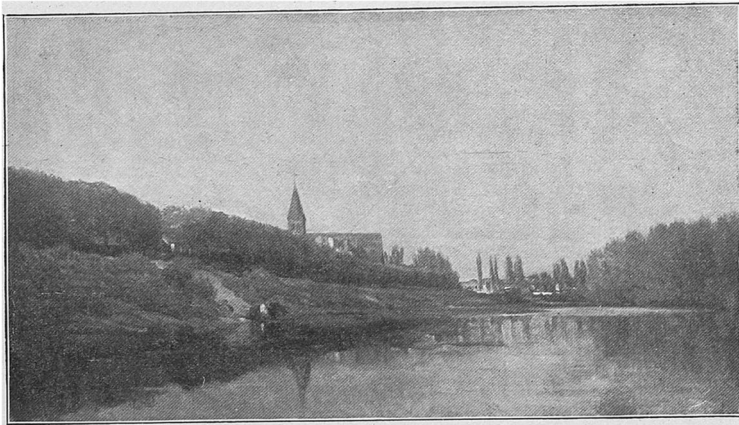
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DAUBIGNY.  
ON THE RIVER OISE.  
10 x 16.

Chickens," twice seen at the exhibition of the Art Club, and the more recent exhibition at the Union League. A little sombre in tone, perhaps, but a Millet withal; standing in contra-distinctiveness to the lighter technique of the landscapes of De Montalant's "Birds-Eye View of Rome," painted in 1874, and Welsch's "View of Lake Geneva," and his Venice. The nerve force relaxes in the beauties and depths of color of "The Forest," by Diaz, a canvas 38x54, possessing all the characteristics of the master hand, so skilled in the interpretation of nature. Deep, grand and glorious in the healthy vigor of its treatment, a worthy companion of the queenly Corot for which an offer of \$30,000 has been refused.

Mrs. Greenleaf, by Gilbert Stuart, is a canvas of fine qualities and in splendid condition, but, again, the poor light mars the brilliancy of the execution.

Two portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Fell, by T. Buchanan Read, painted in 1868, in Florence, mark the domestic sense and leaning of that period, and closes a collection graced by the forenamed gems of art.

#### THE LATE GEORGE INNESS ON THE NUDE IN ART.

SOME ONE handed to me an interview with George Inness, which was published some twenty years ago. Not only is the mooted question on "The Nude in Art" quite exhaustively treated of, but there are some other thoughtful considerations well worth perusal, and I take great pleasure in giving below the substance of the great painter's views:

"The Nude in Art is a subject on which many artists hold views much more conservative than they are given credit for.

"Undoubtedly, some pictures and statues are immoral in their tendency. I don't think that the 'Venus' of Titian is the purest form of Art. Titian's object in painting was not necessarily a licentious one, but was probably to exhibit his marvelous power of imitating flesh. This was a false motive, and the consequence is that the sense of nakedness predominates over the ideas of form, chiaroscuro and color. Had these ideas been equally operative in his attempt to produce a piece of realism, what I should call the extra-sensuous would not have been the great feature of the picture. Had he been governed by these ends he would probably have chosen his subject differently. As for such representations as 'Leda and the Swan,' 'Danae,' 'Venus and Adonis,' etc., they certainly are beyond the pale of toleration. No modern artist would publicly exhibit such subjects. It seems to me, moreover, that thousands of fashionable imported figure-pieces, in which laces and furbelows direct attention to forbidden charms by concealing them, are scarcely less objectionable. You know the canvases that I mean. They come from France, from Spain, from Italy, and adorn hundreds of parlors in every city in Christendom.

"The point I start from is the motive of the artist. If his motive

is pure, his work will convey pure ideas. This rule is simple, and can be verified. It is of universal application. Specialists in morals are not authorities on art. Art is above any ideas that moralists possess—just as religion is above any such ideas. Religion is not governed or controlled by moral ideas. It creates moral ideas. In like manner true and pure art creates good taste. Good taste can not be created from ideas about good taste. It originates in artistic inspirations which are above such ideas. Now, good taste may be called the guardian of morality in art matters; it prevents the painter from painting what is morally offensive. The man with a fine artistic instinct would hate, detest, putting anything impure on his canvas; he couldn't bear the sight of it; it would be antagonistic to his feelings. When objectionable pictures are painted, depend upon it they are done with intent—an intent that is abhorrent to a fine artistic instinct. The best safeguard, after all, is an ideal representation of one's subject. All art in which the ideal predominates is pure. It is excess of realism in art that makes art works disgusting. Here is a pencil sketch of my own—a young girl about to slip into a brook from the overhanging trunk of a tree. She is disrobed, and proposes to take a bath. I did it with the purest kind of motive, feeling that it was a thing of beauty, and knowing that in no other way could I convey the sentiment which I wanted to convey. I shall put it on canvas, keeping the background cool and sweet, and trying to idealize the subject as much as possible. It seems to me that this subject, so treated, is as pure and beautiful as any other. If I should put coarse realism into it it would be horrible. Moreover, I paint the girl a distance of thirty or forty feet, which gives at once a subdued effect. The reason for doing this is that the mind does not receive the full impression of any subject looked at, unless the object is at a distance three times its own length or height. For example, a man six feet high should be painted as if he were eighteen feet off from the spectator. If he is in the midst of accessories, a proportionate distance should be allowed in addition; else you get a linear impression only, and produce a work more or less literary or descriptive. You can't receive the full impression of a large object that is just under your nose. It must be distant from you at least three times its own length. This is a law of true realism. Take —'s *genre* pictures, for example. They are literally transcripts from the model who stands almost beside him. They are too sensuous. They are not art. The artist must never forget that in nude figure-painting, when the ideal is ignored, the tendency is inevitably to the lustful. The nude human form should never be painted for its own individualities—there is no use in so doing but from a desire to represent beauty in form. Otherwise the result is invariably something shocking to modesty. We don't need to contemplate individualities and peculiarities of the male and female figures, unless we are anatomists or surgeons. Who ever drew an objectionable inspiration from the sight of a beautiful Greek statue? Mere nudity is not necessary for immorality. The pictures in such a journal as the *Police Gazette* are not pictures of the nude. A woman's stocking, the arrangement of her dress, the attitude of her figure, the expression of her face—any of these, and much less

any of them, is enough to vitiate and degrade an illustration. We all know very well what such things are produced for. But who supposes that Michael Angelo or Flaxman was prompted by objectionable motives in the production of their masterpieces of sculpture?

"Indeed these works are free from the snare of color, but recall scores of great paintings of the nude in the European galleries. How many of them are as pure as the 'Venus' of Milo? Take, for example, Titian's fine picture, 'Sacred and Profane Love,' in the Borghese collection at Rome. Assuredly there are no traces of improper intent. Nor is the influence of the presentation to be found fault with. Hundreds of similar cases might be adduced.

"Gerôme is by no means a representative of the purest artistic principles. If his 'Phryne' had been painted in accordance with those principles, nobody in the world would criticize it. Gerôme is too realistic with regard to form. He does not idealize enough. His treatment of form is literal, literary, descriptive rather than ideal. As to his 'L'Almée,' a simple-minded artist would have given us the picturesque and no more; for that would be the impression that such a scene would naturally make. If a painter is to hunt through all the details of such a scene, and note all the seductions of the dance, with the intention of particularizing them, the best plan would be to drop art, and write objectionable books. Lefebvre's 'La Cigale' is silly; neither nature nor good art. Correctness of linear design it may possess, but further than that it has no beauty at all; it has neither color, distance, air, space, nor chiaroscuro—none of the elements that make a work of art beautiful or desirable. As for its morality, it is perfectly negative. There was not artistic power nor motive enough in the man to create anything when he did that. One trouble about some nude pictures is that they present the form at the expense of atmosphere, distance and space. Hence the mind of the spectator is occupied in excess with the particularities of the form.

"An artist has as good a right to be considered sensitive to the claims of morality as any other person. But I think he has a tendency to detest professional moralists; and in this respect he resembles the old theologians, who held that morality doesn't save a man. I think, in general, that singleness and sincerity of artistic aim will never go far astray. If the artist obeys his inspiration, and goes straight ahead to give it to the world, he is not likely to miss the mark. The half-dressed French toilet-scenes, and all trumpery of that kind, do not impress as having been done from a desire to present what is truly beautiful. But because some works of art are immoral in their tendency, it would not be fair to condemn the whole profession of artists.

"As for the recently expressed opinion that the tolerance of vulgar pictures in some quarters is due to the influence of 'a sickening cant about high art,' this is a mistake; in fact, such works are always looked upon by artists as a low form of art. One chief complaint of artists is, that a part of the public run after things that are not high art at all. I never heard a human being call such pictures high art. I admit at once, that many figure-pieces in private and public collections do not subserve the interest of spiritual culture. Yet, their presence in hundreds of cathedrals and churches, in the Old World and in the New, is evidence that they have been supposed to possess this function. The fact is, that the human mind of necessity exists and acts on a sensual basis; without its passions it would not be what God has created it. These passions exist, and always must exist. Man's effort should be to learn how to use them, not how to stifle them. Dam them up at one point, and they will overflow at another. Still, as I have said, the motive of the artist should be taken into consideration, and it must not be forgotten that many figure-pieces, to which objection might at first be made by some specialists, were conceived and executed as representations not of the physical, but of the ideal.

"The artist finds constantly that the very necessity of his art-life is the cultivation of his moral powers. The loss of these is the loss of all artistic powers. He knows this, and he feels it. Of course, on specific points of casuistry, there are differences of judgment. There are things which one man thinks to be of the most vital importance morally, but which to another man quite as good, pure, just, and honorable, are of no importance whatever. The discrepency is due to the influence of education.

"In his late work on 'The Renaissance in Italy,' Mr. Symonds asserts that 'the spirit of Christianity and the spirit of figurative art are opposed, not because such art is immoral, but it cannot free itself from sensuous associations. It is always bringing us back to the dear life on earth, from which the faith would sever us. It is always reminding us of the body which piety bids us to forget. Painters and sculptors glorify that which saints and aesthetes have mortified. The masterpieces of Titian and Correggio, for example, lead the soul away from compunction, away from penitence, away from worship even, to dwell on the delight of youthful faces, blooming color, graceful movement, delicate emotion. When the worshipper would feign ascend on wings of ecstasy to God infinite, ineffable, unrealized, how can he endure the contact of these splendid forms in which the lust of the eye and the pride of life, professing to subserve devotion, remind him rudely of the goodness of sensual existence?' As displayed in its most perfect phases, in Greek sculpture and Venetian painting, art, dignifies the actual mundane life of man; but Christ, in the language of uncompromising piety, means everything must be alien to this mundane life—self-denial, abstinence

from fleshly pleasure, the waiting for true bliss beyond the grave, seclusion even from social and domestic ties."

"That is all very pretty and very nice, but I want to ask the moralist if he is going to create Heaven by his morality; in other words, if he intends to create spiritual states by means of moral ideas. The world is full of sensuous beauty. would you destroy it? Why did God create it? Could the human spirit rise unless it had power through the body of gratifying passion? What is the vital difference between the teachings of Christ and the teachings of Buddha? The latter says, 'Abstract yourself from the world.' The former says, 'Be in the world, and be not of it.' The teaching of the Bible is that God has created good, and has created evil, and that the duty of man is to choose between them. To destroy man's appetites, and the power to gratify them, would be to destroy the power of choosing between heaven and hell. If we are to rise spiritually, we must have the opportunity to choose not to gratify these appetites. The truth is, that the moralist preaches to himself and to his class. I acknowledge no class. I object to the pretensions of the moralist because it is his aim to rule mankind by external forces, whereas the force that conquers is the force within—the spiritual force. Mr. Symond's mistake is in assuming that the meaning of Christ's teaching about self-denial, abstinence from physical pleasure, and so on, lies in the letter rather than in the spirit. Christ never said anything that need lead an artist to be ashamed of, or sorry for, creating or enjoying sensuous form. The lily of the valley is sensuous form; Christ bids us consider it. Art is representative of spiritual principles—it is founded upon laws which are analogous to the laws of life. The great spiritual principle of unity, for example, is the fundamental principle of all art. The great spiritual principle of harmony—harmony in form, harmony in color, the general harmony arising from the relation of things to one another, and the relation of parts to parts, must be considered; and, so far as possible, realized by every artist in his work. No man can be in the pursuit of such studies as these without finding it necessary to refer back constantly to the principles of his own constitution as a human being, of his relation to life and to society. There is quite as much reason, therefore, to believe that the artist may be of as salutary service in the make-up and development of humanity as the merchant, the tailor, the carpenter.

(To be concluded in the next number.)

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## FOR THE COLLECTOR AND ART CRITIC

A valuable gift to the Library of Congress has been made by Gen. William B. Franklin of Hartford, Conn., who has presented a perfect copy of Capt. John Smith's history of Virginia. The book is one of importance in its relation to early America, and is best described in its title, as follows:

"The General Historie of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles; with the names of the Adventurers, Planters, and the Governours from their first beginning Anno: 1584. to the present 1624. With the Proceedings of Those Severall Colonies and the Accidents that befell them in all their Journyes and Discoveries. Also the maps and Descriptions of all those Countreys, their Commodities, people, Government, Customs, and Religion yett knowne. Divided Into Sixe Bookes. By Captain John Smith sometimes Governour in those Countreys & Admirall of New England."

This old Smith history is a large paper copy of the original folio, or 1624 edition. It is bound in red crushed levant and bears the name of Reviere as binder. The edges are full gilt, while there is an abundance of gold tooling on the back and sides, with the French dual crown interwoven. The letterpress is clear and unsoiled. The copy is a perfect one, containing the few lines of Errata at the end and the original impressions of portraits of the Duchesse of Richmond and Lenox, to whom the work was dedicated, and of Mataoka, the native American princess, daughter of Powhatan, and better known as Pocahontas. The portrait of the duchess is a three-quarter length by William Pass, the Pocahontas portrait being by Simon Pass.

Some value of the book may be gained from the knowledge that copies sold in the past twenty years have brought prices as follows: Brinley copy, 1879, \$1,800; Beckford copy, 1883, £605 sterling; Barlow copy, 1890, \$1,900. All were of the same edition as the one now presented to the Congressional Library by Gen. Franklin.